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BACCALAUREATE SERMON

June 11, 1893



Columbia College
in the City of New York

PROGRESS IN KNOWLEDGE
THROUGH LOVE

BACCALAUREATE SERMON
OF 1893

BY

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CANON OF WINDSOR, LATE PRIMATE OF
AUSTRALIA AND TASMANIA

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Eph. III., 18, 19: *That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.*

All anniversary celebrations must be pregnant with suggestive contrast, between that which endures and that which passes away—between the short life of each generation and the long continuity of deep-rooted institutions—between forms and circumstances which change, and principles which are immutable—between the necessity of actual growth, which is laid upon all that is finite, and the steadfastness of the ideal which, if it be true at all, is an attribute of the Infinite and the Eternal. But I think that this general characteristic comes out with some special force—certainly to a speaker, perhaps also to his hearers—on such occasions as this; when one whose life is mainly in the past, illuminated not by the magic brightness of hope, but by the more prosaic light of experience, has to address mainly young men, who are still in all the freshness of their early manhood, looking onward to the unknown capacity and expansiveness of the future; when (as to-day) he speaks, under the auspices of a University essen-

tially like, yet in all associations and circumstances utterly unlike, the ancient Universities, with which he is familiar, in the familiarity both of knowledge and of love; and, above all, when he speaks in the House of God, where necessarily all the changes and chances of this mortal life are seen from the vantage-ground of Divine and therefore imperishable truth, revealed to us, as otherwise in divers measures and divers manners of imperfection, so unique and perfect in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Out of the sense of such contrast we are taught by the maturest philosophy that much of our best and deepest knowledge comes. So it is with us to-day. The consciousness of progress—a rapid and auspicious progress, if I mistake not—is necessarily your watchword. But progress, in the true sense of the word—distinct from mere vicissitude and change, as the stream of a great river from the continual ebb and flow of the waves upon the seashore—depends on the realization in right harmony of both these contrasted conditions. It must have its capacity of change, expansion, growth; but it must also have a continuity of idea and principle and life, running like a golden thread through the whole texture of what is woven by the hand of Time. The hope of progress is almost equally incompatible with belief in changeful, isolated Individualism, and belief in an iron unchangeableness of Law. It finds—it always has found—its best inspiration in that Christian belief, which at once realizes man and God, and realizes both as One—resting on the great mystery of mysteries, which Trinity

Sunday has but now pressed upon our thought—knowing the eternal and unchangeable Jehovah as our Father indeed, who lives in His children by the Indwelling Presence of His dear Son, who quickens and moves, without overwhelming, their free spirituality by the breath of the Divine Spirit.

Let me speak to you to-day of this conception of true progress, under the guidance of the text, closing St. Paul's sublime prayer for his converts in Asia, which, as in all the deeper utterances of this Epistle to the Ephesians, unites with fervour and passion of enthusiasm the most philosophical coherence and comprehensiveness of thought.

I.—In it we have his ideal of growth in knowledge, "strengthening men to apprehend" at once "all the length and breadth," and "all the depth and height" of truth. "To apprehend," as our Revised Version rightly corrects the older translation, not "to comprehend"—to grasp, that is, the real though partial knowledge, with which in respect both of Nature and Humanity we are wisely content, without waiting for the complete demonstrative knowledge, of which necessarily a finite mind is incapable in contemplation of the infinite, and which accordingly in us is possible only in relation to the creations of our own minds, impossible in relation to the creations of a higher Hand.

Through such apprehension there is, first a growth in "the length and breadth," the visible and obvious expansion of our knowledge. This expansion is not only continuous and irresistible, but it has its increase (so to speak) of acceleration, as the ages roll on. Mar-

vellous is the degree of that acceleration, which is characteristic of our own time. New fields of observation and study are being opened day by day—largely by the growth of our mechanical and physical science—in all regions of the earth, in all depths of the sea, in all the strata of the air around us, in all the vastness of our planetary system, and the yet more illimitable vastness, which spreads beyond. Larger inductions of Law are continually extending themselves, not merely in space but in time; for everywhere the historical method of study is triumphant, declaring true knowledge of the present to be impossible without the larger knowledge of an all but immeasurable past. And from these expansions there naturally follows, as the curriculum of your own University most plainly shows, a continual enlargement, not only in variety but in specialization of study, almost bewildering to those who lived their academic life in older and simpler days, and a continual development of inventions, utilizing that variety of knowledge for the service of humanity. This expansion—scientific, literary, æsthetic—is to the mass of men the most certain, the most intelligible, the most immediately valuable. Our age glories in it, demands it for its own needs, rewards it with its prizes of wealth and fame. Even our faith accepts it as a gift of God, a broken light from the Infinite Knowledge to which all things are present; our universities are therefore called upon to welcome it, in their twofold character, as homes not only of education, but of research: and they obey that call freely everywhere, not least freely, if I mistake not, in this new and growing country.

But there is another expansion “in depth and height,” which St. Paul seems to place in climax even above this more visible and obvious expansion.

It is an extension in depth, insisting on going down below this wide variety of visible phenomena to the few great truths and energies which underlie them ; in going back thro’ the ages of the past, to the origin from which all this *Kosmos* sprang ; in correlating all various forms of thought and knowledge with one another, not only in one great harmony but in one great development. Everywhere the secondary strata of thought are being examined, not merely for what they themselves can reveal, but in order to pass through them to the primal rock below. So in purely physical science men seek to penetrate to the secret of Matter and of Force, if indeed they be distinct from one another ; in Physiological Science, to the secret of Life ; in the study of man, to the secret of free spiritual Personality ; and altho’, as yet, they have to regard these as distinct, yet to find out, if it may be, their relations to one another, and to the One Cause from which they must ultimately proceed. In fact, they have to acknowledge in some sense the old saying *Omnia abeunt in mysterium*, even when they will not give to the word mystery the meaning which the New Testament places upon it—as a secret (that is) of the Divine Nature, to reason, it is true, indiscernible, but to faith a secret no longer, because revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is an extension, on the other hand, in height ; not content to know all truths, as (so to speak) on one level both of dignity and of importance, but—just be-

cause it recognizes in the human nature, which contemplates truth, the subordination of body and soul to spirit—rising in a corresponding gradation from truths material and psychical to truths spiritual. In each department of knowledge it seeks the supreme idea, up to which all observation and discovery lead. In the relation of these various departments to one another it acknowledges distinction between the highest, which is an end in itself, and the lower, which should simply subserve it. And perhaps it feels these distinctions most profoundly and most keenly, when it tries to make these conceptions its grounds of action, and so passes from the purely intellectual into the moral sphere. In fact, like the Wise Man of old, it bids us distinguish from mere knowledge and understanding the true Wisdom, which is the grasp of the end and purpose of man's own being. Perhaps it goes on like him, to see that the attainment of it in each mind is impossible, unless it has some glimpse of the end and purpose of all creation ; which to one who believes in God must be a glimpse, whether through reason or through faith, of the Supreme Wisdom of the Creative Mind.

In some sense it is clear that this latter extension is in its method and object the opposite of the former; its eyes are set towards a brightening future, and not towards the dimness of a distant past. As it traces in the universe itself a constant evolution of higher out of lower forms of being, so it looks on to a corresponding evolution of higher knowledge in the hereafter. But yet in either case the progress leads the

mind from the finite and actual towards the Infinite and the Eternal. There is a true significance, although clothed as usual in a crude material form, in the old Indian legend, which tells how the two lesser gods equally realized the infinitude of the Supreme Deity, when the one dived unceasingly below, while the other soared unceasingly above.

. Now in either aspect this extension of knowledge is to the world far less obvious and certain than the visible and tangible growth in length and breadth. It is apt to seem transcendental, mystical, unreal ; it has no results of manifest usefulness to be applauded and rewarded ; in the strong sense of practical needs and difficulties the world looks with some impatience on devotion to its service of the highest and keenest intelligences. But I venture strongly to contend that, just for this very reason, it should hold some primacy of honour within the quiet and thoughtful precincts of a University, in view of that double function of which I have spoken : as a place, which has leisure for research into the realities lying below or above the busy world of immediate usefulness ; as a place of education of the mind in its nobler capacities to a recognition of something higher and deeper than the occupations and interests, which will only too certainly absorb the larger portion of actual life hereafter.

It has been said regretfully that in the wide extension of secondary knowledge, which is new, the world has lost the spirit of those older days, when the standing-ground of men's idea was far narrower than

now, but when in height it reached to heaven above, and in depth to hell beneath. But, if it be so in the world, it should not be so here. It is the very function of a University to teach a nobler wisdom—to insist that the gain of the new need not be, and shall not be, the loss of the old—to see that the expansion of the visible horizon of discovery around us shall not so absorb our mental vision, as to make it unable or unwilling to look into the darkness of the underlying depths, and to the brightness of the heights above. It was in the consciousness of this function that, by that good old tradition which you, my brethren, have inherited in your own College, and have faithfully preserved, the inner life of every University was so strongly pervaded with the religious idea, which—whatever else it does—must educate the highest spiritual faculty, and must bring the soul face to face with ultimate realities, both with the foundation on which all rests, and with the perfection up to which all rises. Ill will it be, if in zeal for what calls itself “positive knowledge,” the significance and the effectiveness of that ancient connection should be lost.

II.—Such is the Apostle’s ideal of a full and harmonious growth of knowledge—an ideal, which must approve itself to the soundest philosophy, as truly as to the deepest religious faith. But what is essentially and vitally religious in his view of it is his conception of the subjective qualification of the soul for the discovery of truth, and of the central objective reality, which binds all truths together. He finds both in Love. It is by “being rooted and grounded in love”

that the soul is to be made strong for apprehension; and that which ultimately it has to apprehend is a Divine "love which passeth knowledge." In exactly the same spirit he declares elsewhere to the Corinthians that while "knowledge"—the hard proud head-knowledge, which he rebukes in them—only "puffs up," "love builds up" in solid substantial growth; and in this Epistle makes the possession and use of truth to be possible only when it is "truth in love." *

There is a profound and far-reaching significance in this religious philosophy. For love in us is the strong recognition, through mind and heart alike, of a real unity, expressing itself in sympathy, between the *Ego* and the *non-Ego*—between the soul within and the realities which are contemplated as around, below, above it. And to see in Love the central life of all these realities implies the conviction that this sympathy in us is no mere imagination of our own, but is the reflection of a Divine sympathy, of which the whole *Kosmos* is but the visible expression. That philosophy has on its subjective side at least this note of truth, that in the search after reality it enlists man's nature as an indivisible whole. It unites in the pursuit of true knowledge the intellectual and moral faculties, which on any other theory are apt to be dissociated; it acknowledges even in the poetic imagination, invariably personifying all on which it gazes, a real insight into the heart of things. And on the other side it holds—surely not without reason—that the great ultimate and central reality—the *Tò"Or*, on

* See 1 Cor. viii., 1; Eph. iv., 15.

which all mere phenomena depend—must have in a similar unity attributes corresponding to these faculties in us, by all of which we approach to some knowledge of its nature. The faith which it involves is like all the other higher faculties of our humanity in “the realization of things not seen,” but it has its essential characteristic in this, that it sees not merely the *Tὸ ἀόρατον*, but the *Tὸν Ἀόρατον*, “Him, who is invisible.”

Let us look, first, at this fundamental principle on its subjective side. Note how this need of love for true insight is exemplified with an increasing force and clearness, as we ascend the scale of knowledge.

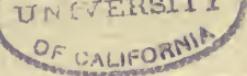
We study the world of Nature—in its vastness and grandeur, or in the minute perfection of each smallest element, in its marvellous order under law, in the yet greater marvel of its continuous development, in the vast pervasiveness of its evident design, in the subtle and exquisite manifestation of its beauty. To that study in all its phases there rightly belongs a kind of love—rudimentary, I grant, in itself and imperfect—in the enthusiastic sense of wonder, delight, reverence, which tinctures the cold dry light of intellect with the glow of emotion and imagination, and inspires the search into Nature with something of poetry, something of affection, something even of moral earnestness. To such enthusiasm, especially characteristic of artistic and poetic genius, there is granted, as Ruskin has so nobly taught us, an intuition of the great Laws of Nature, and the unity binding all in one, to which the more prosaic reason hardly attains. And we may

note that this enthusiasm not only grows in itself, but assumes more and more the character of real sympathy, as we pass from the world of inanimate Nature to the world of Life, and especially when we come to know those orders of creatures, which have, in what we roughly call instinct, the rudiments at least of our own intellectual and social and moral nature, and which accordingly stir in us the feeling of humanity, and claim from it the recognition of some measure of rights at our hands. Without something of this love it may be questioned whether there can be a real insight into the inner secret of Nature as a whole, as distinguished from its outward form and partial developments; it can hardly be questioned that the hard, dry study of mere laws and forces fails to unfold and educate our own full humanity. What noble, yet what mournful, candour there is in the confession of one great leader of Science in our own day, that "by turning his mind into a great machine for grinding general laws out of observation of facts," he had lost his old capacity for the enthusiasm of wonder and admiration, and produced in his nature a kind of moral atrophy, a "colour blindness" to the sense of grandeur and beauty!

But it is when we pass from the lower realms of Nature to the higher realm of humanity, that the need of that which is more properly called love for full knowledge is most keenly felt. None can know his fellow-men deeply and truly, who studies them as he would study lifeless things, without one touch of sympathy. The so-called knowledge of the world—faithless, love-

less, cynical—seldom penetrates below the surface of outward action; it knows little indeed of the inner forces and capacities and aspirations of the soul, which outward action can but faintly express. Nay, among these, in virtue of its own nature, it can understand only those impulses of self-regard and self-assertion, which mark the survival in man of the dread struggle for existence in the animal world; of the higher humanity of loving self-sacrifice it is utterly unconscious. Men are coming to see, as in political and social life, how the keenest and brightest intellects, thus destitute of sympathy, fail utterly in dealing with men, falling into errors and follies fairly impossible, nay fairly incredible, to far duller men who have hearts to feel. I note that in our days even the hard Science of Political Economy is beginning to temper its old belief in pure self-interest, and to take account of the self-sacrificing enthusiasm of love, as at least one of the great factors in organizing human society. Yes! a man must love, if he would pierce to the real heart of humanity—if, even in his erring and sinning fellow-men, he would trace still the lingering impress of the image of the Divine—if he would have any conception of that real and vital unity, by which humankind becomes an organic whole, and thrills with a common life.

But if this law thus holds in the spheres of created being, and thus increases its cogency in proportion as they rise higher in gradation, must we not almost necessarily infer its supreme application to the knowledge of the Supreme Creative Power? In some de-



gree it is this application, which underlies even those lower applications of which I have spoken. That enthusiastic love of Nature—is it not really the reverent love of some Being, insensibly and irresistibly personified, of whom Nature is the creation and the expression, and who in “Nature’s voice” speaks to the soul? That love of humankind, strong in spite of all the follies and sins of actual men, unwearied by life’s failures and the world’s ingratitude—is it not really the love of One, not a personified abstraction, but a living Being, whose image is in humanity, and whom through humanity we can best know? But it is when the soul, putting all else aside, seeks to know something of the First Source of all life and being, that this Law comes out in its highest strength and perfection. Then it is that the Apostolic saying stands forth in transcendent clearness—“He that loveth not, knoweth not God,” as He really is.

I am far indeed from thinking that even a purely intellectual research leads in no degree to a God—even to a personal and living God. The freshest modern thought on the evolution of the order of being tells us plainly that behind it philosophy must acknowledge “a Cause, of which the one thing we know is that it is Teleological,” implying Design and Purpose; and what is such a Cause as this but an Eternal Mind? Of the revelation of beauty in creation, as distinct from order and usefulness, we have been profoundly taught that, as it needs personality in us for its apprehension, so it surely implies also a Supreme Personality for its manifestation. The very ex-

istence in the world of a moral nature in its highest creatures, and a great force in history, "which makes for righteousness," must imply corresponding attributes, only infinite in their greatness, in the Creative and Ruling Power, on which all nature and history rest; and these attributes essentially belong to Personality. All these lines of thought, even if they are studied in the coldest, most unsympathetic reasoning, converge (as it seems to me) to one great conclusion, and by the fact of convergence infinitely multiply their strength.

But I do say that here, also, sympathy—an infinitely humble and yet confident sympathy—is the key of knowledge. It is through the sense of moral relation to the Supreme Power, rightly absorbing the almost boundless reserve in us of love—the love of duty, trust, reverence, self-sacrifice, which earthly objects, even the noblest, cannot claim and cannot satisfy—it is through this that the knowledge of God assumes real vitality and sovereign force. It is through this that it calls for our recognition with an imperious moral claim, which cannot be put off in a contented Agnosticism, as though it were an abstract theory, having no vital connection with life. It is through this that it comes home to all minds, all ages, all characters of men, and, wherever it thus comes home, assumes a dominant, an all but exclusive, power over the soul and the life. What infinite difference there is between the recognition, however clear, of a Supreme First Cause, an Almighty Creator and Ruler, even an Eternal Source of all being, and that moral consciousness of God, stamped

upon the opening of Our Lord's Prayer, as really Our Father in Heaven, whom we can love because He first loved us! The one (to use the old Patriarch's comparison) is the "hearing of Him by the hearing of the ear," the other is the "seeing Him face to face"; the one is but the conclusion of reasoning, the other is the victorious power which moves and overcomes the world, and the knowledge of which, here and hereafter, is "the life Eternal."

III.—Such is St. Paul's teaching on the subjective side—that the soul which would have, in all those extensions of which we have spoken, the knowledge of things, of man, of God, must be—for his phrase is remarkable—not fired and animated by love as a glorious sentiment, but rooted and grounded in love as the strong fundamental Law of knowledge. But the very reason of this truth lies in the corresponding doctrine, that the ultimate reality in the universe itself, the ultimate object, which by contemplation and sympathy we have to know, is a Divine "Love, which passeth knowledge."

Note, my brethren, the full significance of this phrase—not only a God, but a God who is Love. It needs no argument to one who knows what a conception of God is, that, if we believe in Him at all, then knowledge of whatever kind must be in different degrees a Revelation of Him. It is to my mind not a little significant that everywhere our philosophy traces out what it calls Laws—laws of Nature, under which works its infinite variety of forces; laws of humanity, which guide and control, though they destroy not, the

liberty of independent and conflicting wills ; laws of thought, affection, moral sense, which our own inner individuality must freely or by necessity obey. Yet is it not too much forgotten, that the very use of the word "Laws," drawn as it is from our political and social experience, properly implies, as existing behind their regularity, a Supreme Will, working with foreseen purpose, working as expressing righteousness ? Against much common usage I venture even to contend, that the word cannot be employed without danger of delusion, except by those who see this Divine Will everywhere manifested or implied, and to whom, therefore, as I have said, all kinds of knowledge are but veiled forms of the knowledge of God.

But what is the central idea of this Divine Personality ? If it is simply the awfulness of Infinite Power, the transcendence of Infinite Wisdom, even the austere and unbending majesty of Infinite Righteousness, then in all these He is immeasurably removed from us, high as the heaven is high above the earth ; and to Him, so conceived, though we may bow in wonder, fear, submission, there can be no possibility in us of love. But in the Gospel there is a better and more inspiring teaching than this. God is indeed All-mighty, All-wise, All-righteous ; but His essential Nature is that He is Love—Love from all Eternity in the threefold unity of Godhead—Love from the beginning of creation to all the creatures that He has made. So to St. Paul to know Him is to know "the Love that passeth knowledge."

It needs a Gospel indeed to make this sure and

certain to us—now that modern thought has discovered, and (I am inclined to think) exaggerated, the discordant notes of evil—of failure and waste, of suffering and conflict, of sin in its degradation and malignity—jarring against that concert of witness to the Divine Love, which the poetry, the philosophy, the religion of the world have, I believe rightly, heard as rising from the realms both of Nature and of Humanity. Yet the perplexity is not new. No one has described more terribly than St. Paul how all creation groans under its burden—how the soul in consciousness of sin cries out “O wretched man that I am!”—how those who have the first-fruits of the Spirit sigh most deeply, under their keener sense of contradiction and imperfection from the high ideal which He has taught them.* But as he knew the need of a Gospel, so from his heart of hearts he believed that this need had been more than satisfied. Therefore he speaks of knowing not simply the Divine love, but the love of Christ—of God (that is) in Christ—as that which can be known, though it passeth knowledge.

As the first Christianity bore that joyful witness to a weary and despondent world in his days, so, my brethren, our Christianity has to bear it now, when we see, and see without wonder, how gloomy, despondent, dreary, pessimistic, is all non-Christian thought.

There is a cloud (men tell us) of blank ignorance between the finite and the Infinite, in the cold gloom of which all glow of love and sympathy must die out. Yes! we answer, but Christ is to us the Word

* Rom. vii., 24; viii., 22, 23.

of God. "No man, we know, hath seen God at any time," but "the only begotten Son has revealed Him," and opened to us "the bosom of a true Father."

There is the darker cloud yet of sorrow, out of which there come to us the cry of suffering, the complaint of cruelty and injustice, the continual rain of tears. Yes! we reply again, but He has in His own Person consecrated suffering, to be the discipline of humanity, the expression through sacrifice of love, the means of the conquest of evil in the soul and in the world. Through all these "the light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding weight of glory."

Ay, but what (it is rejoined) can be said of the darkest cloud of sin—what of its horror—what of its mystery—as striving against God, as outraging His righteousness and His love, as marring the humanity made in His Image, so that it were better for thousands had they never been born? And we, if we are honest and wise, must acknowledge frankly and solemnly the darkness of this mystery—only seeing dimly that it runs up into the yet greater mystery of the freedom, on which depends the very possibility of moral goodness. We must confess—what the study of the history of all human thought, alike in philosophy and religion, plainly shows us—that for himself man can but feel with an ineradicable consciousness that in some way this mysterious power, being an anomaly monstrous and unnatural, must be taken away, and yet can but guess and speculate how these things shall be. But the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, while it does not yet solve the mystery of the origin of evil, yet swallows

up its darkness in the transcendent brightness of the greater mystery of salvation—in those twofold gifts, distinct yet inseparable, of Atonement in the Cross of Calvary, taking away by Justification the guilt of sin, and of regeneration by the indwelling Presence of Christ in the soul and in the Church, breaking its bondage by Sanctification and restoring to us the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is enough for us to know that “there is no condemnation,” and no hopeless and grovelling slavery under sin, “to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.”

And if, after all these things, men point us at last to the chill shadow of death—as to that in which our very self, when it has played its little part in the world’s drama, dies out for ever—dwell on the intimate connection of our humanity with the perishable and perishing world of Nature—and ask How can the creature of a day have any trace of that likeness to the Eternal, which alone can justify a confidence in the Divine Love to us, and make possible a returning love to Him? —then we come at last to that joyful word, clenched by the Resurrection and Ascension of Him who spake it, “I am the Resurrection and the Life; and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”

So every way it is clear that if we would know—not in mere flashes of speculation and hope, but in the calm and ever brightening light of certainty—that the one great reality in all the spheres of life is a Divine Love, which passes knowledge, we must know it as it is manifested in Christ. For by that manifestation

through a Divine humanity we know it as having the tenderness of sympathy; nay, as involving through that sympathy the willing sacrifice for us, which in our conception is the crowning element in its perfection. We know, as St. Paul elsewhere teaches, that we are followers of God, as walking in love, when we add, "as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us." *

IV. Thus, my brethren, to the Christian the whole ideal of progress in knowledge grows out—the objective and subjective corresponding, as they always must correspond, with each other. On both its sides I venture to press it upon you, in relation to the whole life of this University.

The University is the highest School of Education. The truth of which I have spoken brings out, in respect of the education of our humanity, the contrast which in some sense notes the great conflict of our time, between a purely intellectual and a moral ideal—between (that is) that which makes the development of understanding for the acquisition of knowledge the one thing needful in education, and that which gives the supreme place to the formation of character.

There is, I know, a lower ideal than either, which is predominantly material, caring mainly, both in the individual and in society, for the improvement not of the true inner humanity, but of its outward circumstances and environment. It bids us estimate even knowledge absolutely by its material usefulness; it makes the increase of material wealth, and that which

* Eph. v., 1., 2.

it can buy, the test of progress, as in the individual so in the collective life ; it holds up for each of us what is called worldly success, in pleasure, in fame, in power, as the object of all study and exertion and hope ; for the community it mistakes bigness for true greatness ; nay it professes to have outlived the illusions of national magnanimity and duty, to refer all things to the test of material usefulness, and to find the one principle of action in the survival and victory of the strong. How great—how fatally great—is the influence of that basest of all ideals on the world of our century, I need not tell you ; perhaps that influence is greatest and deadliest in communities advancing most rapidly in material growth and prosperity. We must even sadly acknowledge its intrusion into higher spheres. The thick yellow river of Pactolus can pollute the clear fountain of knowledge, and even the stream of living water, which flows, like Siloam, from beneath the altar of God. But within the precincts of a University, surely that base materialism can have no open acknowledgment of honour ; the very idea of liberal education, as distinct from the technical instruction, which the necessities of life demand, is belief in it for its own sake and its effect on our general humanity, without thought of visible and material usefulness. It is one of the chief functions of a University to protest against this basest ideal, both by word and life, in the name of true humanity, for the sake of the happiness and nobleness of the ages to come. Here, therefore, it seems to me, as I have said, that the overt question lies between these two higher ideals of which



I have spoken, and the question is surely one of importance simply infinite.

Both, I freely grant, have a certain height and nobleness. Far be it from me to depreciate for a moment the education of the intellect by knowledge in the right harmony of its faculties—the extension of the grasp through understanding of the laws of things and men—the insight of higher reason into the principles which give life and inspiration to law—the intuition through the imagination of beauty, grandeur, sublimity. It is simply an obedience to a law, indicated by the capacities and opportunities of our nature; it is one part of that imitation of God which is the object of our being. But still we ask, “Is it the supreme law? Is it the imitation of the supreme attribute of God?

And the answer which the Gospel gives to that question is an unhesitating answer. As God is in His central essential Nature not Wisdom, but Love, so the supreme end, to which human life must move, is to love rather than to know. Therefore to educate rightly is not primarily to develop the intellect, that it may grow up by itself—lonely, loveless, it may be merciless—using things, and creatures, and men, unsparingly for the advance of knowledge, but to form character, to train the will to do its appointed part in life, to strengthen the sense of righteousness, to kindle the spirit of love, to show men how to realize self in order to sacrifice self, and to assert liberty with a view to the “service which is perfect freedom.” That this is the ideal of our ancient Universities we know; it is wit-

nessed to by the importance they assign, not merely to teaching and study, but to the influence of their common life under a right harmony of freedom and authority, to the cultivation of moral relations of duty, loyalty, affection, to the ruling and exalting force in them of the religious sanction of that common life, by the power of faith and the inspiration of worship. In your University here, my brethren, under perhaps different forms and conditions, I trust that the same noble ideal is as truly acknowledged and reverenced as in days gone by. God forbid that it should ever be dethroned from its rightful place as a supreme inspiration and a supreme guide! And you, my younger hearers, when your time of study is over, and you go out into the world to repay there to humanity what humanity has here given you, remember that your supreme gift, your supreme qualification, even before the bright, keen insight of intellect, will be strength, purity, nobleness, tenderness of character. It is this, which makes the true man; it is this which makes the true servant of humanity and of God.

But the University is also a place of study and research into truth. To it under this aspect the corresponding question presents itself, What is the great ultimate reality which it is true wisdom to know? And the answer brings out here also an ultimate and infinite contrast--the contrast between a strong, vital religion and a despondent or contented Agnosticism as to absolute Being.

That there must be some great ultimate reality we may take for granted. It is true that the growing

sense of the vastness and complexity of knowledge, demanding necessarily an increased division of intellectual labour, tends to over-specialization, with the danger of absorption in a single branch of study as the one thing needful. But, as in protest against this, men seem to me to be feeling more and more deeply the need of some wider philosophy, which may correlate these special discoveries in one great harmony and development. There is, again, a system of thought, which bids us be content with positive knowledge of the secondary things wholly within our comprehension, leaving all consideration of the greater mysteries—asking of the sum of being simply, How? and not Whence? or Why? But that system is, I see, rejected, as dealing merely with the husk and not the kernel, in the name not of religious faith but of true philosophy. No! that search into the height and depth must live, as it always has lived, in the history of human thought. It is felt dimly by all to be a necessity of our human nature; to the believer that necessity depends on the truth, which St. Augustine has so nobly expressed—in words which no familiarity can make hackneyed—that “God made the soul for Himself, and that it is restless and disquieted till it find Him.”

For that search cannot be satisfied by the veiled or unveiled Materialism, which finds the origin of being in some physical Force—self-moving and the source of all motion. Against such theory there is an unanswerable protest in the consciousness of the essential superiority, even in finite man, over all that is material, of the power to think, to know, to feel, to love. Nor can

we rest on the more fascinating Pantheistic dream of a pervading Soul of the universe "becoming in humanity conscious of itself"; for, if there be any human conviction absolutely ineradicable and irreversible, it is that of a real personality of freedom of will in us, which utterly refuses absorption. And if we are bidden to rest on Law, we see clearly that Law, if it be anything more than a description of form and method, implies some energetic Power working through it.

So, I repeat, the great alternative makes itself felt. On the one hand, to give up the search—either absolutely, refusing even to ask whether the ultimate reality is, or virtually, by holding it as existent indeed, but "unknown and unknowable,"—and to endeavour, with scant success, I think, to fill up the infinite void so created,—for the intellect by accumulation of lesser knowledge—for the soul by a vague worship of Nature or Humanity.

On the other, to find everywhere, or rather (as St. Paul teaches) to know as finding us everywhere, a Supreme "Love which passeth knowledge"—the Personality (that is) of a living God—in His own Nature, as the great mystery of Trinity Sunday teaches, love from all eternity—in His Creation, having true relation to all His creatures, from the least even to the greatest, and, in the old simple words, not only making but loving all.

Between these alternatives I find it hard to conceive of hesitation; for the one leaves unsatisfied the fulness of our own humanity and the needs and aspirations of its daily life; the other satisfies all these

by what the text so nobly calls a “filling up to the fulness of God,”—calling out, as in the first great commandment, an answering love, as from all the heart of emotion and soul of aspiration, so also from all the mind of thought.

There is to me a deep interest in remembering that, as the motto of our oldest English University cuts off all such hesitation, when it acknowledges the *Dominus illuminatio mea*—since to the Christian the Supreme Light is life, because it is Love—so you, my brethren, have borne the same witness in the motto of your own College, *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen*. And unless your assembling here to-day is a mere form, you must yourselves personally take up, as your own, that noble witness. For it is your custom that, at the gatherings which mark the eras of your Academic life, some word shall be spoken, drawing its inspiration not from the collective wisdom of men, but from a revelation of God; therefore not content to find the *Vox Dei* merely in the *Vox populi*—the voice (be it observed) not of the multitude, but of humanity, in its right orders and degrees,—but hearing the *Vox Christi*, as rising above and interpreting this lower witness. Nay more than this, that same custom marks then, not merely by a self-congratulating review of knowledge and of influence and power, but by the worship, which implies the rest of all energy and aspiration upon a Wisdom coming from on high.

Again I venture to say, God grant that what is here implied be to you all a living and effective reality, not for your own sake only, but for the sake of

the true progress and nobleness of the University itself—for the sake of that higher national life, which it should help to foster—for the sake of that yet higher service of God and man in the Catholic Church of Christ, to which the leisure and wealth of thought given to you here should supply those who can be the best and truest servants ! God grant, I say, that it be a reality ; and a reality it will be, just in proportion as you conceive it, not in some vague transcendental vision of the Infinite, beautiful and unsubstantial as a dream, but in that simple, definite living knowledge, alike through light and through grace, of God in Christ, which He Himself declared to be the very "life Eternal," and to be made through Him the treasure of even the simplest humanity.





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